

# The Mirror

OF

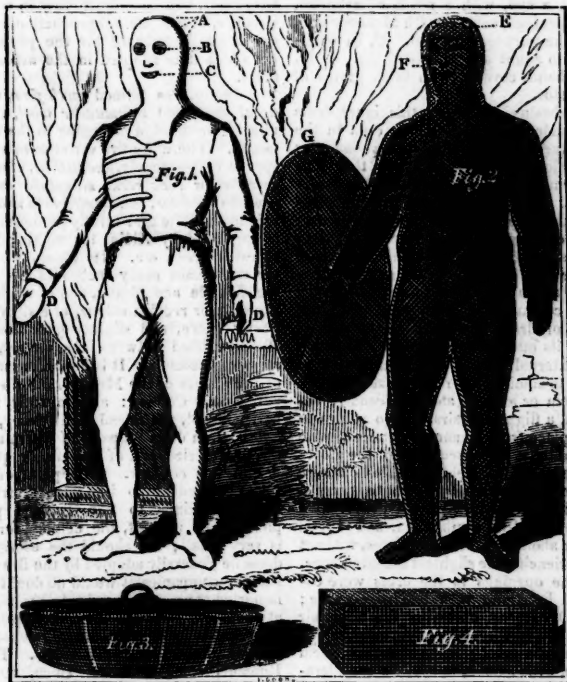
LITERATURE, AMUSEMENT, AND INSTRUCTION.

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## Fireproof Dress.



[At page 95 of the present volume of *The Mirror*, we quoted a few experiments with the Chevalier Aldini's Dress for the preservation of Firemen exposed to flames. The Chevalier's plans were first fully developed at the Royal Institution, and about three months since we were devising means for a more extended explanation of the Fireproof Dress in the pages of *The Mirror*; but time, who tarries for no man, outstripped us, and we find that Dr. Reece, in *The Gazette of Health*, for the present month, has realized all that can be wished on the subject, in a lithograph of the

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Dresses, &c., and an explanation which is sufficiently popular, and free from technicality, to become interesting to every reader. The importance of the subject need not be insisted on; since the recent occurrence of many distressing accidents by fire warrants our calculating on the attention of the reader, as much from a sense of humanity as a gratification of curiosity. We shall therefore proceed to quote such of Dr. Reece's description as is requisite for the explanation of the above Cuts.]

To enable a person to pass through an avenue or room filled with flame, or to

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ascend or descend a flight of stairs or a ladder enveloped in flame, Aldini recommends two dresses: one (the inner) made of a mineral production, termed asbestos, and the other (the exterior) of wire-gauze. The accompanying drawings represent (Fig. 1) a person clothed with the asbestos dress, and (Fig. 2) with the wire-gauze dress over it.

*Explanation of Fig. 1.*

A, a cap, with a mask, of asbestos. B, openings, covered with Muscovy talc, for the purpose of vision. C, an opening, to admit air for breathing. D D, the hands covered with thick gloves of asbestos.

Asbestos, of which this inner dress is made, is incombustible, even in the strongest fire, and is so slow a conductor of caloric (matter of heat) that it is commonly denominated a non-conductor of it. The advantages of a dress composed of such material, in cases of fire, are obvious. Being incombustible in the strongest fire, or when the whole place is in a state of *complete* combustion, and being at the same time a very slow conductor of heat, it protects the skin or dress that may be in contact with its internal surface, from the action of external fire, a sufficient length of time to admit of a person to pass through a room or avenue, and to ascend or descend a flight of stairs, and to return to the place from whence he started, with impunity. In consequence of the gloves being made of treble asbestos cloth, a person is enabled by them to grasp a red-hot bar of iron, or an article in a state of active combustion, and to hold it for about five or six minutes, without experiencing the slightest inconvenience.

The openings in the dress were covered by Aldini with fine wire-gauze; but Dr. Reece, observing the warm air that passed through its apertures, which contains a great portion of carbonic acid and a little smoke, to excite a considerable degree of inflammatory action in the external tunics of the eyes and edges of the eye-lids, and irritation in the lachrymal glands, so as to occasion a very troublesome secretion of tears, substituted the Muscovy talc for it, which has been found not only to protect the eyes from the action of heated air, &c., but to answer much better than wire-gauze for the purpose of vision. This variety of talc, which is procured chiefly from Russia, has of late years been found in the province of Pennsylvania. The best quality of it is more transparent than the common window glass of this country; and in parts where it is most abundant,

it is used in lieu of glass for windows. In the Russian navy it has always been employed instead of glass, on account of not being liable to be broken by the concussion produced on the discharge of cannon, or any other heavy artillery. In its native state it is very easily divided into plates; and is so finely lamellated, that Haüy says he divided a piece only of the thickness of an inch into five hundred thousand plates. The transparency, toughness, and incombustibility in common fire, of this mineral production, render it particularly fit for the purpose for which it is adopted in the asbestos dress.

Asbestos, also termed *earth flax*, *mineral wool*, and *salamander wool*, is a mineral production belonging to the talc family. There are five varieties or subspecies of it—namely, *amianthus*, *elastic asbestos* or *rock cork*, *mountain cork*, *common asbestos*, and *ligniformed mountain wood*. The first variety (*amianthus*) is employed by Aldini for making the asbestos dress, &c. Its fibres, which are sometimes many inches in length, are flexible and elastic, and of a white greenish or reddish colour, of a silky or pearly lustre, and slightly translucent. When rubbed between the fingers, it appears unctuous. It is found in many of the islands of the Mediterranean sea, particularly Corsica: also in Italy, Siberia, Egypt, the Island of Anglesey, in Scotland, in different parts of North and South America, and of an inferior quality in this country. The price of it varies according to its quality, from twelve shillings to two guineas per pound. At present, the demand for it is very small; but should the asbestos dress be generally adopted by the fire insurance companies, it would no doubt be imported at a very reduced rate, probably at about one-eighth of the present price. The incombustible nature of asbestos was well known to the ancients. The Romans, some centuries since, made cloth of it, to wrap up the bodies of their saints, &c. when exposed to the funeral pile, for the purpose of preserving their ashes from contamination! A large piece of asbestos cloth, which had been long used for this purpose, is preserved in a state of great perfection in the library of the Vatican, at Rome. Several moderns have succeeded, by means of an admixture of flax and oil, in spinning and weaving this article, both of which are afterwards destroyed by exposing the cloth to a red heat. Aldini, after many fruitless attempts to make the asbestos cloth without the aid of flax or oil, fully succeeded in accomplishing

it by means of steam. He found, when exposed to the steam of boiling water, the fibres were readily twisted and bent, so as to admit of being spun and weaved. The texture of the cloth, thus manufactured under his direction in Italy, appears to be very loose; but the threads, which are about one-fifth of an inch in diameter, are very strong. He has also made cords with it, with which ladders may be made, to enable a person, protected by the asbestos and wire-gauze dresses, to ascend or descend through a blazing fire; and which may be conveyed through a flame to the upper stories of the premises, so as to allow a person to escape through a window.

In consequence of the present high price of asbestos cloth, Aldini, in many of his experiments (conducted on a large scale) covered the trunk of the body, and the lower and upper extremities, with thick woollen cloth, that had been macerated for a few hours in a strong solution of common alum, and afterwards quickly dried. Woollen cloth is nearly as bad a conductor of caloric as asbestos; and when its combustibility is considerably diminished by a diffusion of alum throughout its substance, it approximates so nearly to the nature of asbestos, that when defended against the action of blaze by the wire-gauze dress, it has been found, in many of the experiments made by Aldini, to answer the same purpose.

The discovery of the safety-lamp, by the immortal Sir Humphry Davy, which has been the means of saving the lives of many thousand miners from a dreadful death, led to the invention of the wire-gauze dress, represented *Fig. 2*. The flame of fire not passing through the apertures of the wire tissue, the space between this dress and that of asbestos is occupied by air, which has been found, notwithstanding the great consumption of oxygen by the surrounding combustion, the production of carbonic acid gas, and the high temperature (when nearly free from smoke and vapour), to occasion little or no inconvenience.—When Aldini repeated his experiments in London on a large scale, so that the men with his protecting dresses were completely enveloped in flame, after remaining in this state upwards of nine minutes, they declared that respiration continued the whole time perfectly free. On taking off the wire-gauze, immediately after quitting the flames, we found the temperature of their bodies increased only about five degrees, and the pulse of each slightly accelerated, with copious perspiration; but not one

complained of giddiness, or any affection of the head. The temperature of the air between the wire-gauze and the asbestos dress has been found to be thirty degrees lower than the air surrounding the wire-gauze dress. This curious fact has been attributed to an absorption of the matter of heat by the wire-gauze during the time it is passing through the apertures, or perhaps some power this metal possesses of combining this subtle fluid, so as to render it latent, and also to the radiating influence of the asbestos dress. The gauze, like that of Davy's safety-lamp, is made of iron wire, and the apertures about 1-25th of an inch in length and breadth.

#### *Explanation of Fig. 2.*

E, a casque, or cap complete, of a size to admit of a hand to pass between it and the asbestos cap, for the circulation of air. A visor is attached to the front (F), for the purpose of rendering the air more fit for respiration. The soles of the boots are made of plate iron, lined with thick asbestos paper, for the protection of the feet. G, a shield of wire-gauze, of the same manufacture as that of the external dress. The use of this appendage being to turn the direction of a strong current of flame, or prevent a quantity of smoke from being forced through the wire-gauze, that would irritate the lungs, on passing through a large volume of flame, the external surface is convex. When flame is not in a rapid state of currency, this part of the apparatus is not necessary. By occupying the right hand, it has been found cumbersome, particularly in a narrow passage. Aldini, speaking of this shield, says "it is of the greatest possible use." In all the experiments made in London, under the direction of Aldini, the firemen declared that they found it of no use, but, on the contrary, an incumbrance. It is, perhaps, only useful in passing through an avenue or room filled with flame, or through which flame is passing with great force.

From the description given of these protecting dresses, a person who has not seen them would conclude that much time must be lost in putting them on, and that they are so cumbersome, as to prevent the active employment of the lower and upper extremities, which is so often necessary in cases of fire. They are so constructed, that, with the assistance of one person, they may be put on in about eight minutes, and, without any extra exertion, he is able to run with moderate speed, to bend his body and joints, and to rise again, without being

sensible of any incumbrance. In the numerous trials to which they have been subjected in London, the firemen have executed the requisite movements with perfect satisfaction to themselves. The dresses are both pliable and light, and the gauze-wire dress, when properly jointed, will not prevent the free motion of the limbs.\*

*Fig. 3.*—A basket of wire-gauze, for conveying a child through flames. The communication with flame being completely cut off by the wire-gauze, a flannel dress will be sufficient to protect the body from the action of the heated air; but if a covering of woollen cloth, prepared as directed, be at hand, the preference should be given to it. By means of a wire-gauze basket, a child aged eight years, wrapt up in thick flannel, was repeatedly carried through a blazing fire (of chips and straw), and although at one time it was enveloped in flame eight minutes, it did not sustain the slightest injury, or apparent inconvenience.

*Fig. 4.*—A case, made of thick asbestos cloth, for conveying very combustible articles through flame. For articles not very combustible, the wire-gauze basket will answer as well as this case.

These means of rescuing lives and property from destruction, in cases of fire, are not recommended by Aldini on hypothesis or mere theory. They are founded on sound scientific principles, and have frequently been put to the test of experience on a large scale. After having made several experiments in Bologna, Geneva, and other places, the results of which were perfectly satisfactory to the numerous scientific characters who witnessed them, Aldini performed the same experiments on a larger scale, at the barracks in Paris, in the presence of the Prefect of Police, and of a commission from the Royal Academy of Sciences, and other philosophical societies.

#### STOKE PARK.—MR. PENN.

*(To the Editor of the Mirror.)*

It was with the feeling of a man who meets with a face long beloved, but, which has been long absent, that I saw the engraving of your No. 424. Stoke has that charm for me which engages the sympathies of all men. It was my place of residence in boyhood. Amidst its overhanging woods, its flowery meads, and churchyards "solitude serene," I first imbibed a love of nature, and her

simple, but not less beautiful adornments of field and fell, rivulet and hill-side. Though years have elapsed since my quitting Stoke as an abode, yet, I still love to pay it occasional visits, and refresh my memory of the happy past, by revisiting those scenes which were dear to my youth, and whose charms have not become the less vivid, though time and circumstances have materially altered the thoughts and feelings of the writer.

But my present object in addressing you is, to add a few particulars to your account of the manor-house at the present day. Of its interior the objects most worthy notice, are—1st, the library, extending the whole length of the garden front, and possessing a very large assortment of classical and valuable modern books, forming a most splendid and tasteful apartment; 2nd, the trunk of the tree under which the proprietor's great forefather, the founder of Pennsylvania, concluded the first amicable treaty with the Indians; 3rd, a sculptured head of the same individual, said to be the only authentic likeness extant. These, with a few paintings and minor curiosities, are the only things claiming particular attention.

It is the park and grounds around the house that the owner seems to have aimed at beautifying most, and in doing so, he has combined the skill of a painter with the judgment of a man of taste. In the various walks and avenues leading from the house, are placed busts of the great men of all ages, celebrated in their various departments of knowledge: amongst these I would particularize the bust of Thomson, which is erected upon a slightly rising ground, from whence may be obtained the most delightful views of the surrounding country. Immediately around the base of the pedestal, many of the various flowers, herbs, and shrubs celebrated in "The Seasons," are to be met with. There is also to be seen an open temple dedicated to Shakspeare, composed of Ionic columns, and containing a head of the bard, with an inscription and a quotation from his works. In the park, about two hundred yards from the house, stands a column surmounted by a statue of Sir Edward Coke. The old manor-house is still to be seen, but in a very dilapidated state, and doubtless in a few years time, it will exist but in name.

Of Mr. Penn, the eccentric, yet benevolent possessor, little can be said. He has neither mingled in the struggles of war, nor joined in the toil of poli-

\* The wire-gauze dress is made in London, by Mr. Toplis, of Frederic Cottage, Goswell-road.

tics; in both of which so many gain notoriety. He is a bachelor, and has devoted his time principally, from his youth upwards, to the improvement and adornment of his property at Stoke, where he generally resided until within these few years. His quitting Stoke after so long an abode there, arose from a disagreement with a landed proprietor, a small portion of whose property interfered with an improvement he had in view.

His eccentricity displays itself principally in regard to females, for whose society he has a most misanthropic aversion, strict orders being issued, even to the domestics of that sex, to avoid obtruding themselves upon his notice. The housekeeper, who has been in his service some twelve or fifteen years, has always, while receiving his orders, stood with her face to his back. To account for this strangeness of manner, it is stated that an attachment he had formed in early life was broken by the unfortunate death of the object of his affections, by drowning, while he stood near at hand, and saw her perish without being able to render her any assistance. Strange though it may seem, yet during his town visits, he frequently delivers courses of lectures on matrimony! — his audience being composed of his private friends.

He has, I believe, appeared before the world more than once as an author. Some years ago a tragedy was brought out at one of the large theatres, written by him, and called, I think, "The Battle of Haddington;" it was, however, unsuccessful.

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## BURYING IN VAULTS.

(For the Mirror.)

"Why should this worthless timent endure,  
When its undying guest is gone for ever?  
Oh, let us keep the soul embalmed and pure,  
In living virtue, that when both do sever,  
Although corruption may her sway assume,  
Th' immortal spirit in the skies may bloom."

HORACE SMITH.

ABOUT a twelvemonth ago, an article appeared in a popular magazine deprecating the custom of interring in vaults. The writer of that paper had personally inspected the disgusting interior of some crowded vaults in London, and bore ample testimony to the evils of the system. Allowing for a little soliloquizing "in the manner of Hervey," his remarks were pointed and discriminating. A correspondent in the same periodical replied, and made an imbecile attempt to prove that the usage of burying in vaults was sanctioned by

the Scriptures, and established by the precedent of the nations of antiquity. But before entering into a minute criticism on the arguments of these disputants, it may be proper to notice a circumstance, the report of which has found its way to the daily and weekly journals, and which has material bearing on the question at issue:

"The inhabitants and neighbourhood of Fetter-lane have been annoyed of late by an increasingly intolerable nuisance occasioned by the vaults of Elim Chapel having been, from springs or other causes, overflowed with water. The stench was so unbearable that the closing of several shops, and a partial stoppage to business, ensued. The nauseous effluvia was communicated to several adjoining streets; and caused, at last, the interference of the City Marshal to procure the opening of the vaults, in which was a depth of three feet of water. If the horrid stench of the unopened cemetery could have been surpassed in offensiveness, it was by the exposure and pumping out of the stagnant fluid; and the respectable householders of the vicinity declared, that had it occurred in the summer, there is no doubt but that some dreadful and contagious disease would have been the result."

Such are the disgusting concomitants which distinguish that "*last, not least*," species of human infirmity which seeks to prolong our stay *with the living*, after the "worms have done their office." Is it not an unnecessary display of the nakedness and shame of our primeval doom thus to erect ourselves a charnel-house in the face of day, and amidst the busy pursuits of our fellow-mortals? The Everlasting has doomed our bodies to return to their kindred and congenial earth; and shall we, encircling us in the gorgeous apparel of a kingly tomb, contrast our loathsome decay with the richness of velvet, and the glittering of gold, and, by our protracted presence, annoy and endanger the living? To defend our position negatively, and without impugning the hallowed authorities already alluded to, we may challenge, with safety, any writer to prove that the practice is sanctioned by divine promulgation; and as to the customs of antiquity in regard to the burial of their dead, taking into view the different climates, prejudices, and superstitions of foreign nations, we should not shrink from breaking a lance with an opponent in the arena of controversy, in support of our doctrine. In such a contest we should have no fear

of being able to prove, that this system of interment is sinful in the eye of God, and degrading in the face of man—a tinsel and humiliating record of our mutability, replete with moral inconsistency and physical evil.

The author of the before-mentioned paper maintained the absurdity, and ridiculed the weakness which dictated such a mode of burial, asserting its contrariety to the divine edict, “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return;” and dwelt upon the risk of contagion from such a custom. His antagonist answered with a few arguments drawn from antiquity and the Scriptures, in favour of interring in vaults; arguments which we flatter ourselves we shall be able fully to refute. He adduced the example of Joshua, who after having hanged the five captured kings, threw their bodies into a cave “where they had been hid,” (Joshua x. 27.) He cited the burial of Lazarus as corroborative of vaulted interment; and refers also to that of our Saviour. After garnishing the nettles of his prosing with the flowers of Holy Writ, he wound up his exposition with an eulogy on what he termed “the light thrown upon history” by such interments, as regards the recognition of persons and features; and a declaration that there was none of the inconvenience or danger apprehended, or demonstrated, by the first writer; as the care of the mason or architect precluded the possibility of contagion. We will now endeavour to answer this gentleman’s objections, *seriatim*.

The precedent of the Egyptians embalming and preserving their dead will not warrant the use of subterranean interment in our climate; as it has been recently proved that the inhabitants of that formerly great and populous country were *obliged* thus to dispose of their dead. The only irrigation, as is well known, which the land of Egypt receives is from the swelling of the river Nile, which, overflowing the country, continues stagnant for several days; and, retiring to its bed, leaves a muddy deposit on the face of the soil; the intense rays of the sun falling on this sediment, gradually restores the land to its usual consistency; but the process of such restoration generates that noxious malaria so often productive of infectious disease; added to this, the copious moistening which even the substratum of the soil receives, remains for a long period after the reflux of the river. Now, it has been proved that the Egyptians, finding that the burial of their dead in the ground which was

thus saturated, was the primary cause of that dreadful malaria which produced the plague, were *obliged to abandon that mode of burial*, and have recourse to embalming, placing the bodies in catacombs excavated in dry places, and at considerable distances from their dwellings. So much for the origin of the practice in Egypt; and now let us investigate the proofs taken from Scripture.

As to the first example, that of the degrading disposal of the bodies of the five executed kings by Joshua, how can we possibly infer, that because they were thrown “into the cave wherein they had been hid,” and great stones rolled into the mouth of the cave, that such a mark of ignominy was the manner of entombment then in use? As well might we insist, that because it was customary in our country, about half a century ago, to suspend the bodies of murderers on gibbets, that that was the rite of burial in use in England. Again, on the other hand, we read that after Absalom was slain in the oak, his body was thrown *into a pit* in the wood of Ephraim; so that we might infer from this, (were not the position untenable) that such a disposal of the dead authorizes the supposition, that it was the practice of Scriptural nations *to bury in the earth*. As to the second example, that of Lazarus; it is true we are told that the scene of his sepulchral rest was “a cave, and a stone lay upon it;” but the frequent repetition of the word “grave,” and the information given by the Evangelist, (John xi. 17,) that “when Jesus came, he found that he had lain *in the grave* four days already,” admit of the probability of there having been a grave within the recess; and this idea is further strengthened by the expression of doubt conveyed in the words of Martha, “Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days;” which shows that the corpse was not embalmed, and being thus perishable, it is not likely that they would leave the body *above ground* in the cave, which, it is probable, was destined to be periodically opened for the reception of the ashes of others. Yet, admitting that the Oriental nations *interred in caves*, we find that these were *in fields or remote places*; and we cannot, by any ingenuity of controversy, strain a comparison between those retired and certainly appropriate sepulchres, and the horrid receptacles of unentombed humanity which are to be found in our crowded cities. But to glance at the



last instance quoted by this gentleman, the burial of our Lord himself, whose body was deposited in a sepulchre newly hewn, and "in which never man had lain." Though our Lord was destined by his Father to assume the garb and evanescence of humanity, the provisions of that earthly assumption extended not to him after death: his body was not destined to claim companionship with the dust of the earth: and though a common interment, "with the funeral ceremonies of the Jews," marked the exit of our Great Deliverer, his body was exculpated from the doom of inglorious decay: in the words of Inspiration, "Thou didst not leave his soul in hell, neither didst thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption!"

The "light thrown upon history" by the discovery of bodies identifiable with historic record, or graphic semblance, is incomparably trifling when weighed with the evil of such a system (for evil it is, though, to a superficial observer, its origin may seem obscure.) We have felt exquisite gratification on reading of the exhumation of Robert Bruce, Charles I., Hampden, and other worthies; and we have experienced the thrill of reverential admiration for departed genius on perusing M'Diarmid's account of the disinterment of Burns,—at the appearance of whose lineaments the workmen stood uncovered; yet the ashes of this illustrious being were consigned to the keeping of his "mother earth;" and on the admission of air into his coffin, that manly face beamed but for a moment in its chastened melancholy, and then, as if shrinking from intrusion on its solitude, melted away, to be beholden no more until that "second coming" which shall "change our vile bodies!" But the rarity of such discoveries, and the interest attending them, present so feeble a barrier to the reasoning against interments in vaults, that to refer to proofs, and expend argument upon them, would be superfluous; and this part of the writer's theory is, perhaps, the most unworthy of animadversion.

The assertion, that "a little care on the part of the architect or mason would prevent the possibility of contagion," strikingly displays the ignorance of this writer, and serves to convince us that he has never been in, nor knows any thing of, a vault for burial. "A little care on the part of the architect or mason," forsooth! What application has this remark to those numerous vaults in London and other immense cities, where the coffins are piled tier

upon tier, to the number of eighty or one hundred in one vault, until the superincumbent weight bears down the inferior pile, demolishing even the triple casement, exposing the mysteries of the tomb, and poisoning the air with the awful fœtor of mortal decay? We have no wish to draw *the too flimsy curtain* which veils such secrets; but we may be permitted to detail the opening of *one* of a series of vaults in a church in London, renowned for its antiquity, preparatory to the reception of the remains of the wife of a public character; and which resembled the scene described by the first writer. When the vault was opened, such was the overpowering stench, that it was a long time ere the workmen could descend. Some period had elapsed since the preceding burial, and the condition of the vault may be more easily imagined than described. It was a square building, the dimensions, perhaps, 12 feet by 18, dimly lighted by small grated windows to the churchyard. The constantly-recurring influx of rain and melted snow, for so many years, had formed a bed of slime upon the floor, of considerable thickness, the dampness of which accelerated the yet slow decomposition of bodies which had been progressing towards that state for ten, fifteen, and twenty years. The men, in removing the coffins, had their constitutional apathy put to the severest test, and were obliged to fortify themselves by having recourse to partial intoxication, during nearly the whole of the time, which was upwards of a fortnight. But oh! who could have forborne to shudder at the repulsive secrets which they revealed, and which ought to have been for ever hidden in the womb of earth! The reverend head of ecclesiastical dignity, and the features of forensic and lordly eloquence, were alike verging to a loathsome senescence amidst "the melancholy brightness of the lacquered plate, and the well-wrought cramp-irons;" giving irrefragable assurance, that "to such complexion we must come at last." A kind of iron shelving was erecting for the disposition of the coffins; and the workmen, in elevating them to their respective situations, were frequently bespattered with the *black fluid* which they contained, and which sometimes exuded so abundantly as to saturate their clothes and linen, and cause them to make a *temporary retreat from the vault*; on one of which occasions it was remarked to the men, by the gentleman superintending their operations, that he "wished *no one* to stay in such

a place, for *it was more than mortal man could bear!*" Such a trifling affair as the driving in of a nail, to secure the loosened plates of inscriptions and crests, gave a new impulse to the pestiferous smell, which assailed you immediately on entering the church, though the vault was situate at the extremity. Now, in such a vault as this, (a fair specimen of the generality of them,) what avails "the care of the architect and mason" towards the prevention of such consequences? And who can define the *extent* of that agency which the malaria of such vaults has in the origin of contagious fever in such a crowded city as London, during the months of an intensely hot summer?

To point to passages of Scripture which favour our hypothesis, would be too lengthy a task: they occur in every book of the Sacred Writings. Did the Bible countenance such a mode of interment, it is strange that so elegant and acute a mind as Gessner's should overlook the fact; for, in his "Death of Abel," he describes the dead as being buried in graves dug in the earth. But we leave our remarks with the public, to whom the other writers have submitted their cause; and though we have materially compressed the comments we originally intended to make, our readers will concur with us in admitting that the custom of interring in vaults is unsanctioned by Scripture and antiquity; that it is contrary to reason, religion, and morality; and fraught with danger to the public health. What so natural as to consign our "ashes to ashes," and our "dust to dust!" A northern poet, in unison with our hypothesis, aptly observes:—

"Man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?  
Dead in the lap of his primeval mother,  
She throws a shroud of turf and flowers around  
him,  
Then calls the worms, and bids them do their  
office."

\* \* H.

#### AMUSEMENTS OF THE LEARNED.

(For the Mirror.)

ALMOST every distinguished character of ancient and modern times has had some peculiar amusement to which he addicted himself, as a relaxation from severer studies. It is extremely curious to observe how much the highest and brightest order of minds have delighted in trifles. Agesilaus amused himself and his children by riding on a stick, and the great Scipio by picking up shells on the sea shore. The most grave and

studious, says Plutarch, "use feasts, and jests, and toys, as we do sauce to our meat." Socrates, in his leisure hours, was accustomed to dance and sing for diversion. The grave Scaliger relates that he was greatly affected by music, and had much delight in beholding dancing. Lucian also confesses that he was infinitely pleased with singing, dancing, and music. Mæcenas was fond of sports and games, in which he was frequently joined by Virgil and Horace. The first of our bards, the immortal Shakspeare, was passionately attached to music, and was an excellent performer on the bass viol, accompanying himself with his voice, which was particularly sweet and harmonious. Gibbon and Pope, suffering much from ill health, found their principal relaxation in pacing quietly up and down a highly-cultivated garden. Gray was rather lady-like in his amusements; fancying no gratification more delightful than lying on a sofa reading novels. Johnson, as is well known, maintained that life contained nothing better than rattling along in a post-chaise; but this is quite outdone by the absurdity of Swift, who amused himself with driving and chasing his friends, the two Sheridans, through all the rooms of the deanery. The literati have also shown themselves by no means indifferent to the pleasures of the table and the sparkling graces of the wine cup. Thomson was an epicure of the first order, and an indolent epicure who would order some favourite dish, and then lie in bed till his servant announced it to be on the table: he would never suffer his peaches to be gathered, but stand with his hands behind him and bite the sunny side of the fruit as it grew on the wall. Pope was rather nice than voracious in his epicurism; but Johnson regarding his palate with undivided attention, would eat till the veins started on his forehead. Montaigne gives a very candid account of his love of delicacies. "It is indecent, and hurts one's health to eat so greedily as I do. I often bite my tongue, and sometimes my fingers, in my haste." None of our English gourmands have yet exchanged the fork for their fingers, though in their love of the banquet they may have equalled the Frenchman.

\* M. B. H.

#### MONTEZUMA.

(For the Mirror.)

WHAT gorgeous dreams of future wealth and  
sway  
Burst on the Spaniards, when they first beheld



The Mexique monarch's home! "This is enchantment."

The fierce invaders cried. Before them stretch'd  
The plain luxuriant 'neath a burning sun,  
And an unsullied sky! Cities and towns  
Did show like constellations on the mead;  
A rich Pactolus stream'd from each bright hill  
That bound the circling landscape to the view!  
The lake, which like a golden sea appeared,  
Shone beauteous in the midst—on it repos'd  
The proudest monument of native art  
That e'er th' uncultivated world upthrew,  
The island capital! to which three causeways

led

Over the tepid lake—The gilded roofs,  
The domes and spires, the glittering minarets  
With dazzling splendour glow'd!—Such was  
Mexico.

The pride and glory of the Western world!  
This was the central city of the realm  
O'er which the warlike Montezuma sway'd.  
Before whose throne a hundred Caziques knelt!  
A thousand lords did homage '—unto whom  
A countless myriad from the East and West—  
From North and South—from countries far and wide

Brought tribute—whose bright fame had spread  
O'er all the ample sweep of that great continent  
Each mountain gave the choicest of her flocks—  
Each teeming valley her abundance pour'd—  
Each river wash'd her golden sands into his lap  
And all the plenty of the land was his—

With barbarous pomp the gorgeous chief  
receives

His treacherous foe, as Troy of old—

\* \* \* \* \*  
It was at noon-day that they seiz'd the king  
(Who had with hospitality receiv'd them)  
\* \* \* \* \*

The city rose in arms—the haughty monarch,  
Subdued in spirit by the galling yoke  
Of long captivity, was held on high;  
And every vassal bow'd his head—that done—  
A flight of arrows from the Mexique bows  
Besieg'd the Spaniards—Montezuma fell!  
Slain by his subjects—each of whom dismay'd  
Fled from the scene and in his temple wept  
before

The idols of his fathers. Every day  
Renew'd the strife. Revenge, the only cry.

'Twas midnight—the Castilian host  
Unto the causeway of Tacuba sped,  
Unseen to fly from whence 'twere death to stay.  
The moon was veil'd behind the angry clouds—  
The night birds scream'd aloft; not one poor  
star

Did light his lamp to show the dubious path  
Over the broken archways; silence reign'd—  
But 'twas the ominous silence of the storm.  
The solemn tramp of the retiring host  
Was not unheard: scarce had they gain'd the  
shore,

When from all parts of that great city rose  
One universal, simultaneous shout;—  
One general peal of warlike music rang;—  
And the great war-drum in the temple toll'd.  
All Mexico in arms at once rush'd on,  
Assailing and assail'd. Friends and foes—  
Spaniards and natives, Tlascalaa allies—  
Push'd on, o'erthrowing and o'erthrown—com-  
mingled.

The wounded Cortes, with scarce half his band,  
Surviv'd, and gain'd Tacuba's shore. 'Twas then  
That horror reign'd;—their luckless comrades  
ta'en,

That night were offer'd unto idol gods.

Such their desert—such ever should it be,  
When man, insatiate, o'er his fellow lords,  
Grasps, with hands of blood, his neighbour's  
gold.

How grimly stern did lurid vengeance frown  
On that appalling night.

CYMBELINE.

## Notes of a Reader.

### AMIALE YOUTH.

In a brief but highly laudatory review of Mr. Godwin's tale of *Cloudesley*, we find the following beautiful portrait of an injured orphan boy. The reviewer characterizes it as "one of the sweetest pictures of educated, civilized youth" he ever remembers to have read:—

"In the various pursuits of classical studies and the English language, in a word, of every thing adapted to his years, the progress of Julian was at this time astonishingly rapid. In the course of the next six or seven years, he shook off every thing that was childish and puerile, without substituting in its stead the slightest tincture of pedantry. The frankness and nobility of his spirit defended him from all danger on that side. The constitution of his nature was incapable of combining itself with any alloy of the fop or the coxcomb. All his motions were free, animated, and elastic. They sprung into being instant, and as by inspiration, without waiting to demand the sanction of the deliberative faculty. They were born perfect, as Minerva is feigned to have sprung in complete panoply from the head of Jove. The sentiments of his mind unfolded themselves, without trench or wrinkle, in his honest countenance and impassioned features. Into that starry region no disguise could ever intrude; and the clear and melodious tones of his voice were a transparent medium to the thoughts of his heart. Persuasion hung on all he said, and it was next to impossible that the most rugged nature and the most inexorable spirit should dispute his bidding. And this was the case, because all he did was in love, in warm affection, in a single desire for the happiness of those about him. Every one hastened to perform his behests, because the idea of empire and command never entered his thoughts. He seemed as if he lived in

a world made expressly for him, so precisely did all with whom he came into contact appear to form their tone on his.

"And, in the midst of all his studies and literary improvement, he in no wise neglected any of that bodily dexterity by which he had been early distinguished. His mastery in swimming, in handling the dart and the bow, in swiftness of foot, and in wrestling, kept pace with his other accomplishments. Nor was his corporeal strength any way behind his other endowments. He could throw the discus higher and farther than any of his competitors. But his greatest excellence in this kind was in horsemanship. He sprang from the ground like a bird, as if his natural quality had been to mount into the air. He vaulted into his seat like an angel that had descended into it from the conveyance of a sunbeam. He had a favourite horse, familiar, as it were, with all the thoughts of his rider, and that showed himself pleased and proud of the notice of the noble youth. He snorted, and bent his neck in the most graceful attitudes, and beat the ground with his hoofs, and showed himself impatient for the signal to leave the goal, and start into his utmost speed. Julian was master of his motions. He would stop, and wind, and exhibit all his perfection of paces, with a whisper, or the lifting of a finger, from him whose approbation excited in the animal the supremest delight. In a word, Julian won the favour of his elders by the clearness of his apprehension, and his progress in every thing that was taught him; and of his equals, by his excellence in all kinds of sports and feats of dexterity, which could be equalled only by the modesty, the good humour and accommodating spirit, with which he bore his honours, rendering others almost as well satisfied with his superiority as if the triumph had been their own."

#### AN OLD FRIEND WITH A NEW FACE.

PREVIOUSLY to his elevation to the sovereignty, Jerome Buonaparte led a life of dissipation at Paris, and was much in the habit of frequenting the theatres, and other public places of amusement. He had formed an intimacy with some young authors at that time in vogue for their wit and reckless gaiety. On the evening after his nomination to the crown of Westphalia, he met two of his jovial companions just as he was leaving the theatre. "My dear fellows," said he, "I am delighted to

see you: I suppose you know that I have been created king of Westphalia?" "Yes, sire, and permit us to be among the first to—" "Eh! what! you are ceremonious, methinks: that might pass were I surrounded by my court; but, at present, away with form, and let's have the same friendship, the same free and easy gaiety as before—and now let's be off to supper." Jerome upon this took his friends to one of the best *restaurants* in the Palais Royal. The trio chatted and laughed, and said and did a thousand of those foolish things which, when unpremeditated, are so delightful. Conversation, it may be supposed, was not kept up without drinking. When the wine began to take effect, "My good friends," said Jerome, "why should we quit each other? If you approve of my proposal, you shall accompany me. You, C—, shall be my secretary; as for you, P—, who are fond of books, I appoint you my librarian." The arrangement was accepted, and instantly ratified over a fresh bottle of Champagne. At last the party began to think of retiring, and called for the bill. Jerome produced his purse; but the king of Westphalia, whose royal treasury had not as yet been established on a regular footing, could find only two louis, which formed but a small portion of two hundred francs, the amount of the restaurateur's demand. The new dignitaries, by clubbing their worldly wealth, could muster about three francs. What was to be done? At one o'clock in the morning, where could resources be found? It was, at last, deemed expedient to send for the master of the house, and to acquaint him how matters stood. He seemed to take the frolic in good part, and merely requested to know the names of the gentlemen who had done him the honour to sup at his house. "I am secretary to the king of Westphalia"—"And I librarian to his majesty." "Excellent!" cried the restaurateur, who now set his customers down as sharpers—"and that noodle yonder is, no doubt, the king of Westphalia himself?" "Precisely," said Jerome, "I am the king of Westphalia." "Gentlemen, you are pleased to be facetious, but we shall see presently how the commissary of police will relish the joke." "For heaven's sake!" exclaimed Jerome, who began to dislike the aspect of the affair, "make no noise: since you doubt us, I leave you my watch, which is worth ten times the amount of your bill;" at the same time giving the host a magnificent watch, which had been a present from Na-

oleon, and on the back of which was the emperor's cipher in brilliants. The friends were then allowed to leave the house. On examining the watch, the restaurateur concluded that it had been stolen, and took it to the commissary of police. The latter, recognising the imperial cipher, ran with it to the prefect, the prefect to the minister of the interior, and the minister to the emperor, who was at St. Cloud. The result of the whole was that, on the following morning, the *Moniteur* contained an ordonnance, in which the king of Westphalia was enjoined to repair to his government forthwith, and prohibited from conferring any appointment till his arrival in his capital!—*Translated from the French in the Literary Gazette.*

#### A LIBERTY BOY.

At the period when Buonaparte was about to be named consul for life, General Saint-Hilaire assembled the troops under his command, and delivered the following harangue:—"Comrades! the nation are deliberating on the question if General Buonaparte shall be appointed consul for life. Opinions are free as air: I would not for the world seek to influence yours. However, I think it right to apprise you, that the first man who refuses to vote in Buonaparte's favour shall be shot at the head of his regiment. Liberty for ever!"—*Ibid.*

#### TASTE FOR ZOOLOGY.

The last *Magazine of Natural History* contains the Address delivered by Mr. Vigers, the ingenious Naturalist, at the breaking-up of the Zoological Club of the Linnean Society, which has been superseded by the formation of the Zoological Society. A more lucid and attractive paper was never yet recorded among the Transactions of any public society. It has none of the cramp-work or useless parade of scientific learning, but exhibits in elegant and comprehensive language, the benefits conferred on zoology by the Institution since its establishment. Nearly all of these accessions to science will even interest the general reader, and we the more regret having only space for the following passage on the present popularity of zoological studies:—

"A striking feature in modern zoology is the publication of popular treatises on the subject. The extent to which some of the more valuable of these productions have been lately circulated,—I shall instance more particularly the *Menageries* and the volumes on *Insect*

*Architecture*, published under the superintendence of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge,—not only proves the popularity of the science, but points out one of the powerful causes that contribute to the cultivation of it. When I mention to you that copies of these publications have been disseminated by tens of thousands, you may calculate not merely how many readers participate in the delights of the study, but how many of them may be induced from the perusal to become observers of nature, if not active co-operators in the science. We may almost, in fact, compare the effects of this copious dissemination of cheap and popular information, to those produced by the invention of the art of printing itself. It was of little avail to the great proportion of mankind that the art existed, if its beneficial effects were to extend only to the opulent and the learned. The fount of knowledge is now open to all: and that it will not be poisoned by rank or unprofitable infusions, we have an assurance in the cordial superintendence of those individuals who are most interested in preserving its purity. It is one of the most auspicious signs of the times in which we live, that men of science, without neglecting those more recondite and technical performances in which it is necessary to concentrate their knowledge, unite in arraying it in that attractive exterior which recommends it to the good offices of every man."

#### SPIRIT OF THE Public Journals.

##### SKETCH OF A RESIDENCE AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

THERE is no other capital that possesses within a charmed circle, as it were, such a variety of beautiful excursions as this city; both sides of the Bosphorus, to the distance of twelve miles, are covered with vales, hills, groves, and sweet retired places, with which the bare and shadeless shores of Naples, or the desert territory that forms half the vicinity of Paris, can bear no comparison. One of the highest attractions of a great city is, surely, to be able to transport oneself, in a few moments, from society and tumult into the loneliness and loveliness of nature: here the stranger has only to step into one of the many hundreds of light barks that wait his bidding, and a few strokes of the oar bear him at once into some rich and silent scene, where the hum of the world is no longer heard. A

small village, a few miles from the city, was more than once our favourite resort: it stood on a steep declivity, and was entirely embosomed in wood, through whose branches the waters of the Bosphorus were seen at the foot of the eminence. The windows of the dwelling where we lodged looked forth on the most exquisite scenery, the sails of almost every nation were perpetually passing by; in the evening came the gilded barks of the Turks, and the cruel sounds of the war sometimes broke on the ear; but in itself the dwelling was a perfect solitude in the midst of its garden, with a cool marble hall, where we preferred to take our meals, for the heat was often excessive. The village in the glen beneath was very neat and shaded, with a fountain in the middle, and a coffee-house adjoining, which was generally full of people, enjoying their coffee and chibouque, and listening to the sounds of the pipe and tambour. Notes of melancholy and sadness, however, would have better suited the condition of more than one family in the neighbourhood. In our walks we passed by sometimes the desolate dwellings, or rather palaces, of two Armenians of wealth and rank: they had been put to death on some charge of treason, and their property confiscated. The blow fell heavily on their families, who were compelled to forsake their luxurious homes, and seek a refuge beneath the roofs of some of their friends; but no friends could supply the place of father and husband, suddenly and mercilessly slain. The houses stood on the edge of the water: they were just those homes to which the heart and memory become deeply attached;—not in the crowded streets of the city, but standing afar and alone, amidst wild hills and wooded glens. Every intercession was made to save the lives of these unfortunate men, but in vain, and the prayers and tears of the wives and children could obtain no mercy. One of the former was yet a young woman, and felt bitterly the reverse that had fallen so early on her head; it was, in truth, a stern reverse; the indulged wife, the mistress of a luxurious establishment and numerous domestics, was compelled to go to the capital and reside in a spacious dwelling that belonged to one of her countrymen; but in this dwelling she had only a solitary apartment, that looked out on a large and naked court. Yet it was doubtful, in her misery, which she regretted most keenly, the loss of all her indulgences and luxuries, or the bereavement of her husband; it seemed, at times, that the

feelings of the woman were stronger than those of the wife. The princely dwellings were in the meantime quite deserted; not a foot entered the many apartments, for the Turks made no use of them. They would have sold them to any bidder, and the price would probably not have been high, for they seemed to be a useless possession.

Amidst the wanderings, near and distant, that take so many of our countrymen to other lands, either in search of a fairer climate, of cheapness, or of picturesque beauty, few situations can be compared for a moment with that of these Armenian dwellings. Their interior was spacious, and very handsomely furnished, if the term may be justly applied to an Oriental residence, into which tables, chairs, mirrors, and beds, do not enter. The Armenians are every where distinguished for their love of luxury;—even their great patriarch, when we visited him, could not possibly, in the costly saloon in which he was seated, have cherished any self-denying thoughts and resolves; the world not only peeped out from every corner, but ran riot round the walls, rich ceiling and floor, ornaments, and splendid attire. What would the first recluses of the Thebais and the wilderness have said, had they entered this chamber of indulgence of the patriarch, in which we took coffee and sweetmeats, and inhaled the odours of rare spices. It is no wonder, if the disciples give way to the love of splendour and enjoyment, where the head of the church sets such an example; and in these now desolate dwellings it was evident no wealth had been spared. The Turks had destroyed or plundered but little of the furniture; and the interior remained in nearly the same state as when the owners had dwelt peacefully there. It was an impressive, but cruel, lesson of the uncertainty of the highest enjoyments; the low ottomans, with their richly-flowered silk covering—the Persian carpets—the floors of costly marble, in the lower apartments, were still there, but “there was silence” in the many chambers. The small case-mented windows looked forth on the Bosphorus; and nothing could be more beautiful than to sit here at evening, and see the sun go down on the varied scenery on every side: on the villages with their white minarets—on the hills covered with woods, or the lonely glens at their feet; while the innumerable sails, as they slowly passed, were purpled with the declining ray. The gardens beneath extended to the water’s edge, and were full of trees and flowers,

but without much taste or order. — *British Magazine*, No. 5.

#### FAULTS ON BOTH SIDES.

(Concluded from page 310.)

I FELL in love again, and beautiful and innocent was the being who now attracted me. She was not, like my former love, an eldest daughter, "come out" to prowl about and pounce upon an eligible establishment, where she might "go in" and be mistress of her own actions. My choice was unsophisticated, and I was happy. She jumped for joy when I made my offer, and we were married in a month.

In both my love affairs I had fallen into extremes; my first love was hack-nied in the ways of that worst of worlds, the fashionable one; and my second had never been used to good society, and was, consequently, unfit for it. It was my pride to take her everywhere, that she might be *seen*; but it was my shame when she was accosted, for I knew she would be *heard*. She had no conversation; she knew nothing about any thing; the topic of the day was a dead language to her; Sir Walter Scott's name sounded not more sweetly than Sir Richard Birnie's; and Lord Byron was a nobleman, and *nothing more*!

This ignorance, however blissful, was not altogether to my taste; I endeavoured to teach my fair one, and therefore I became to her somewhat of a bore. Certain young men, quite as ignorant of things in general as she could possibly be, frequented my house, and as *they did not* teach, she thought them infinitely more agreeable than her husband. She grew weary of me, and, alas! she ran away.

The case was flagrant; without difficulty I obtained damages, and a divorce; but still, as usual, when my friends and neighbours (or rather as benefit play-bills express it), when "the nobility, gentry, and public in general," had duly discussed the case, they unanimously decided that there had been "faults on both sides."

I was now once more a single man, at least in the estimation of marriageable young ladies. But the singleness obtained by a divorce is not quite satisfactory; it is like involuntarily beginning the world again, when, what the newspapers call "the devouring element," has destroyed one's stock in trade. One cannot but remember, also, that "such things were;" and that a certain person, intimately acquainted with all one's failings, and foibles, and fancies, is let

loose upon the world, and that, "if a body meet a body in a narrow lane," the accidental rencontre would be a bore.

I am quite sure that nothing endears a couple so much to each other as divorce; the moment all ties are severed, we feel that the *shades* of character cannot, by any possibility, hereafter annoy us, it is astonishing how very prominently all the little *lights* start forth on the canvass. So it was with me; others looked upon me as a single man, but I could not blot from the tablet of my memory that I had heard Jemima Simkins vow to love, to honour, and to obey me. She had done neither of the three duties, and it wounded me keenly to hear faults attributed to both sides; but had a footpad stopped me on the highway, and robbed me of watch and cash, I do believe the same thing would have been said.

The same thing, in fact, *was* said, shortly afterwards, when I was an innocent sufferer, to a severe, indeed, a ruinous extent. Having no domestic ties, no cheerful fire-side at home. I began to get low-spirited, and longed for some sort of occupation. I had no pursuit; I could not ride out of a morning, for the mere purpose of riding home again in the afternoon. It is very well for elderly ladies to take what they call airings; but a man in the prime of life requires something more exciting—at least I did; and when I had arranged with the partners of a banking-house in a neighbouring town, that I should be admitted into the firm, I became comparatively happy, for I deemed myself a man of business.

Accounts were not at all in my way. As a boy, I had sighed over the mysteries of multiplication; addition had added materially to my distress; and subtraction had taken away much of my repose. Daily, however, did I ride into town to call at the bank; assuming all the serious importance of a man of business, talking of my engagements and avocations, and really persuading myself that I had a great deal to do.

All this time I actually knew nothing of the true condition of the bank; I had given it "my name, which is no part of me;" and, in return, I was told that I should add considerably to my income. But though I had evidently "no speculation in my eye," my partners certainly had in theirs. We speculated in mines, and, unluckily, the mines exploded, and the bank was blown up.

This news was told me one morning, when I was snugly enjoying my tea and toast: I was insolvent; every thing I

had went to answer the calls upon the bank ; and, after all, the creditors were paid three-and-seven-pence in the pound : so they curse me, beggar as I am. The principal obloquy certainly has fallen on my partners ; but still every body says there were " faults on both sides."

Is not this hard ? Have I not a right to execrate old women's sayings ? But I must end my lamentation ; and for once I will admit that even the saying in question may, in an instance or two, few and far between, be used with propriety ; for should the reader not quite perceive the point and drift of this paper, and accuse the writer of dulness, then I am quite sure there must be faults on both sides.—*New Monthly Magazine.*

## The Selector ;

### AND LITERARY NOTICES OF NEW WORKS.

#### MUSIC.

WE have been much gratified with " A History of Music, by W. C. Stafford," forming the 52nd volume of *Constable's Miscellany*. It is withal a delightful little book ; and though within four hundred pages, traces the history of Music from its origin to the present day, or, from " Jubal, the father of all such as handle the harp and the organ," to the present popularity of that sylph of song, Miss Paton. It does not pretend to a scientific treatise on Music, but a popular account of the progress of the art ; and we are happy to perceive that in the arrangement of his materials, the editor has availed himself of the latest, as well as the best, authorities : his quoted illustrations of national music are extremely interesting, and are principally from recent travellers.

Popular works on Music have always occurred to us as among the most attractive reading : they glide on, and the narrative flows *con spirito*, which is just the character of Mr. Stafford's book. The names, dates, and facts are, for the most part, very neatly brought into the page. Thus, in " Flemish and German Music : "

" The most celebrated composer Germany has produced since Beethoven, was Carl Maria Von Weber, a native of Eutin, in Holstein, where he was born in 1787. The celebrated *Der Freischutz* has made the name of this author as familiar in the mouths of Englishmen 'as household words ;' and his qualities are as well known to us as those of any of our native-born professors. Till the

year 1824, however, he had been scarcely heard of in England, though his countrymen were enraptured with him ; and the first question put to a foreign amateur, on his arrival in Germany, was—' Do you know the Freyschutz of Marie de Weber ? ' ' No,' was invariably the reply. ' Fly, then,' was the response, ' and get rid of your culpable ignorance, and we promise you pleasure—admiration—delight—enthusiasm ! ' All these emotions that opera is undoubtedly capable of exciting ; and his *Oberon* and *Euryanthe* are scarcely less highly distinguished by marks of original genius. The enthusiasm excited by the performance of *Der Freischutz* in England, where it was brought out in 1824, caused Mr. Kemble to engage M. Weber as director and composer of the music for Covent Garden Theatre. He was in England, however, only a few months, when he died, at the house of Sir George Smart, in 1826, to the great regret, not merely of the musical world, but of all who knew him."

There is, nevertheless, some obscurity in the preceding extract, from which the general reader would conclude Mr. Kemble to have introduced Weber's *Der Freischutz* to our stage. The fact is, the opera was first offered to Mr. Kemble for Covent Garden Theatre, but being rejected, it was produced at the English Opera House in the following summer (1824). Mr. Arnold, the proprietor of the latter theatre, is therefore entitled to distinct mention in the success of the opera in England. The overture to *Der Freischutz* was first publicly played in England at the oratorios of 1824. We chanced to hear it ; and so insensible were the audience to its merits, that the early part of the performance was coldly received, and slightly hissed. Towards the close, however, the applause became very great.

The following passage from the " History of Music " will doubtless be acceptable to the reader, as it illustrates the earliest music of our own country :—

" The Saxons, when they conquered England, were heathens ; they were converted to Christianity by missionaries, sent over by Pope Gregory, A. D. 596, by whom the Gregorian service was introduced. From that time, the arrival of prelates and other churchmen from Rome, caused it to be generally used in the churches of the island ; and, when monasteries were founded, establishments for teaching music were connected with them. The venerable Bede, who lived in the eighth century, was an admirable musician ; and he celebrates the



names of many churchmen and others, who cultivated the tuneful art. Alfred the Great touched the harp with the hand of a master; and, according to the annals of the church at Winchester, and many ancient authors, he founded a musical professorship at Oxford. Music appears, at this period, to have formed an important part of a learned education; but the difficulty of attaining a complete knowledge of it was such, owing to the imperfect state of notation, that nine or ten years were generally spent in the study.

"The celebrated St. Dunstan, who flourished from about A.D. 930, to A.D. 988, was a great musician. He furnished several churches with organs; which instrument seems to have been in very general use in the tenth century in this country. The monks encouraged the study and practice of music; but to them is ascribed the suppression of the romantic and amorous songs of the Saxons, of which we have now no remains.

"The science of music suffered nothing in England from the Norman invasion. The army of William was accompanied by minstrels, one of whom, named Taillefer, who was distinguished no less for his courage and intrepidity, than for his musical skill, asked and obtained leave to begin the onset. He advanced before the troops, singing the song of Roland; and, rushing into the thickest of the fight, lost his life.

"After the Norman conquest, the itinerant professors of music became known by the general appellation of *Minstrels*; and were also distinguished by the more specific ones of *Rhymers, Singers, Straytegers, Joculars, or Jugglers, Testours, or relators of heroic action, Buffoons, and Poets*. The king had his minstrel, who was an officer of rank in the courts of the Norman monarchs; and the household establishments of the nobles and great men were not complete without this important character, who, 'high placed in halls,' formed a striking feature in the rude sports and solemnities of the times. Strutt tells us that, 'in the middle ages, the courts of princes, and the residences of the opulent, were crowded with minstrels; and such large sums of money were expended for their maintenance, that the public treasuries were often drained.'

The name of our gallant and chivalrous monarch, Richard I., must not be omitted in a notice, however brief, of English minstrelsy. He was not only the patron of poets and minstrels, but himself struck the tuneful lyre with no

mean hand; and some of his songs are still preserved. The example of the king was followed by his nobles and courtiers; and, in their baronial mansions, on all occasions of high solemn feasts, the observances of chivalry, and the charms of music, were united.

"Illumining the vaulted roof,  
A thousand torches flamed aloof;  
From many cups, with golden gleam,  
Sparkled the red metheglin's gleam:  
To grace the gorgeous festival,  
Along the lofty window'd hall  
The storied tapestry was hung.  
With minstrelsy the rafters rung,  
Of harps, that from reflected light  
From the proud gallery glitter'd bright.  
To crown the banquet's solemn close,  
Themes of British glory rose;  
And to the strings of various chimes,  
Attender'd the heroic rhymes."

"The imprisonment of Richard, on his return from the Holy Land, by Leopold of Austria, and his deliverance through the means of his minstrel Blondel, by whose indefatigable zeal and devotion to his master's interests it is said that the place of his imprisonment was discovered, are events familiar with every school-boy.

"It is a matter of debate as to the period at which the degree of Doctor in Music was instituted in this country. Wood, in his *History of Oxford*, affirms that it was conferred by Henry II.; but Spelman thinks that the degree was not granted to graduates in any science, in England, till the reign of John, about A.D. 1207. It is certain, however, that music was very early honoured amongst us by the application of this distinction to its professors.

"Walter Odington, a monk of Evesham, in Worcestershire, flourished in the thirteenth century, in the reign of Henry III., and was celebrated for his profound knowledge of music. He wrote a treatise on the art, the fifth and sixth books of which treat of its state in England in the author's time; and we learn from it, that musical tones were expressed by the first seven letters of the alphabet—*g*reat, *s*mall, and *d*ouble; *s*olmization was practised after the Guidonian method; *longs* and *breves* were then in common use in the chanting, or plain song, and five lines were used for the musical stave.

"It is evident from Chaucer, that music was a very general accomplishment in his time. He describes his 'squire' as singing or fluting all the day—his monks, nuns, and mendicant friars, are likewise vocalists; and he mentions, amongst instruments, the fiddle,\* psaltry, harp, lute, cittern, rote (or

\* This was a Saxon term, and seems to have meant the same instrument as the French *vielle*.

hurdy-gurdy), and the organ. Many songs were written at and before this period; but, though we have some remnants of ecclesiastical chants of an earlier date, there is no secular music existing anterior to the fifteenth century. The most ancient English song that has yet been met with, with the music, is one written and composed upon the battle of Agincourt, in 1415. At this period, the English people frequently had music at their weddings, banquets, and other solemnities; and even the lowest class were not without it in their humble amusements. The theory of the art was little known beyond the clergy, who were the composers of the songs (for the most part, at least), which formed the diversion of the laity. Music had also become an essential part of the choral service of the church: it was used in all cathedrals and collegiate churches; and in most of the latter there were large endowments for the canons, minor canons, and choristers.

"It is not exactly known when the musical characters now in use were invented, nor when they were introduced into England. They all appear to have been derived from the points, the use of which Guido, if he was not the first to invent, greatly simplified. We find Thomas de Walsyngham, who flourished about A.D. 1400, mentions five characters as used in his day, viz. the *large*, the *long*, the *breve*, the *semibreve*, and *minim*. He adds—'Of late a new character has been introduced, called a crotchet, which would be of no use, if musicians would only remember, that beyond the minim, no subdivision ought to be made.'—What would this ancient have said to the quavers and demi-semi-quavers of our days?

"Musical notation was much improved by the invention of printing, which, as Sir John Hawkins observes, proved an effectual remedy for all the evils arising from its instability; and, besides easing the public in the article of expense, it introduced such a steady and regular practice, as rendered the musical an universal character."

Perhaps the present work might have been advantageously extended to another volume. We should like to see a fine chapter or two on the philosophy of Music; and though its speculative pleasures would have interfered with the matter-of-fact character of the volume before us, the entertainment of the reader would still have been kept in view.

## The Gatherer.

A snapper up of unconsidered trifles.

SHAKESPEARE.

FLASH.

THE language of the thieves, or the low Londoners (a distinction, I fear, without a difference), is perhaps one of the most expressive—nay, one of the most metaphysical in the world! What deep philosophy, for instance, is there in this phrase, "the oil of Palms!"—(meaning money!)—*Dedication to Paul Clifford.*

## CURIOUS COGNOMEN.

THE hero of Waterloo must be reminded at dinner every day of his most brilliant victories; for, by a recent examination at a police-office, it appears that his grace's cook rejoices in the appellation of *Monsieur Bony*! This is reducing the ex-emperor to submission with a vengeance.

## LIBERTY GAINED BY FASTING.

THE records of the Tower mention a Scotsman, imprisoned for felony, and strictly watched for six weeks; during which time he did not take the least sustenance; on which account he obtained his pardon.

P. T. W.

## ORIGIN OF THE PHENIX.

In the Holy Land, yea all over the east, the palm tree is by way of eminence called the *phenix*, because of its numerous uses, inasmuch that Palestine could hardly be inhabited without it. When the palm tree grows old it is cut down, and the stump burnt to ashes, from which ashes springs a young palm tree, or rather young phenix.

HALBERT H.

## ORIGIN OF THE NAME HANS-TOWNS.

"THE Germans (says Baily,) bordering on the sea, being anciently infested by barbarians, for their defence, entered into a mutual league, and gave themselves the name of *Hans-towns*; either from the sea on which they bordered, or from their faith, which they had pledged to one another with their own hand; (*Hansæ*) or from the same word, which in their language signified a league, society, or association."

P. T. W.

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